

# POVERTY AND THE FORCES OF CHANGE IN AFRICA

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## Abstract

The aim of this work is to examine poverty and the forces of change in Africa in order to investigate the precarious socioeconomic situation that designates several events from the internal influences and the western network society. The socioeconomic and political interactions of the highly industrialized capitalist countries and the implications of such interactions on other developing nations in the global system are hereby discussed. The paper posits that the intrinsic forces against the resolution towards meaningful development of the Africa in the midst of abundant human and natural resources are not rightly directed. However, the assistance proclaimed by the western world is in turn based on selfishness and exploitation. Recommendations are proffered to enhance attitudinal re-orientation towards the development of the people of Africa as in other climes. A socio-ethical approach was utilized in the data analysis.

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**Keywords:** Poverty, Forces, Change, Africa and Development

## Introduction

The World Bank (2005) reports that 1.4 billion people in developing countries are unable to live well because of lack of basic needs of life such as food, water, clothing, shelter and other social amenities. The number of the people that lack material resources that are necessary for subsistence remained constant at around fifty percent. While the proportion of people suffering from malnutrition and hunger had fallen since the early 1990s, nevertheless, the number of people that lack access to food has again risen when compared to the recent increase in food prices. It is obtained that one billion people experience hunger, while another two billion are undernourished across the world. However, the majority of the countries that make the least progress in reducing malnutrition are in sub-Saharan Africa (United Nations Reports on the Millennium Development Goals 2008).

Between 1990 and 2006, about twenty seven countries of which the large majority in Sub-Saharan Africa made no progress in reducing childhood deaths and maternal mortality. For instance, in Sub-Saharan Africa a woman's risk of dying from preventable complications of pregnancy and childbirth over the course of her lifetime is one out of twenty two cases (1 in 22), compared to one out of seven thousand three hundred in developed regions. More than one million children are left motherless and vulnerable because of maternal death yearly (United Nations Reports, 2005). Sahlins equally observes that

One third to one half of humanity are said to go to bed hungry every night. In the old stone age the fraction must have been smaller. This is the era of hunger unprecedented (Sahlins 1974:36).

It is incontrovertible that the discursive terrain of the forces of change towards human values between the developed and developing countries is a controversial one. As one of the most critical and contested terms of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the concept of the forces of change or the principle of globalization is interesting and perplexing mainly because of its multiprofile. The forces of change designate several phenomenal events from internationalization, the Western network society to neo-colonialism (Afolayan, 2007: 321). The forces of change may be seen as the economic interaction of the highly industrialized capitalist countries as well as the effects of such interaction on other developing nations involved in the global system (Afolayan 2002:39). Africa as a continent has witnessed the forces of change based on cross-cultural social-political ideology and economic interdependence. Poverty has persisted and is still persisting; and meaningful socio-political and economic development is still a mirage. Therefore, this paper intends to examine poverty and the forces of change in Africa with a view to identifying the intrinsic forces against the resolution towards development and alleviation of the people's sufferings in the midst of abundant human and natural resources.

### **Clarification of Concepts**

Poverty is an equivocal term. Gutierrez (1996) explains the term from both secular and religious perspectives. He explicates material poverty as the lack of economic goods necessary for a human life. In this sense poverty is considered to be degrading by the human conscience. Material poverty here connotes a sub-human situation; to die of hunger, to be illiterate, exploited by others, and to be denied of one's integrity (Gutierrez 1996:163-164). Poverty is a central theme in the Bible; it describes social situations and also expresses spiritual experiences communicated with difficulty. This involves personal attitude, a

person's attitude before God, and the relationship of persons with each other. In the Bible, the term poverty is a scandalous condition inimical to human dignity, and contrary to the will of God. Aku et. al. (1997) categorizes poverty along five dimensions:

- Personal and physical deprivation in health, nutrition, literary, educational disability and lack of self confidence.
- Economic deprivations, include lack of access to property, income, asset, factors of production and finance.
- Social deprivations which includes the barriers to full-participation in social, political and economic life.
- Cultural deprivations involve values, beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, information and orientation.
- Political deprivations inform that ignorance is a fundamental deterrent to the elimination of poverty because it complements conditions of exploitation, domination and deprivation. (Aku 1997: 46-47; see also UNDP 1990; Schubert, 1994; Hemmen, 1994 cited in Anyanwu, J. C. 1997:98).

The term force means natural or bodily power, active strength; a power that changes or that may produce changes or that may produce changes of movement in a body on which it acts. It can be a person, thing, belief or action that has a strong influence to cause widespread changes in a way of living (Procter 1980: 436; McDonald 1977:217)). The forces here refer to socio- ethical and political manipulations such as economic aides and global influence. The forces could also be from secular ideologies; atheistic Marxism or any religion. (Vinay and Sugden 1987:24-28).

Segun (2007:28) states that to know Africa is to have some knowledge of its geography and interaction with its people and the environment. Hence Nkrumah (1970) has clearly given the real picture of Africa thus:

Africa and its islands, with a land area of some twelve million square miles --- could easily contain within it, and with room to spare, the whole of India, Europe, Japan, the British Isles, Scandinavian and New Zealand. The United States of America could easily be fitted into the Sahara Desert. Africa is geographically compact, and in terms of natural resources,

potentially the richest continent in the world (Nkrumah 1970:13).

Ali (1980) corroborates the above submission on the enormous natural wealth with which Africa is endowed. Ali gives tentative estimates here based on the fact that no enough prospecting for resources under the ground has taken place. Nevertheless, he considers it fair to say that Africa has ninety six percent of the non-Communist world's diamonds, sixty percent of its gold, forty two percent of its cobalt, thirty four percent of its bauxite and twenty eight percent of its uranium. While Africa's iron reserves are probably twice those of the United States, and its reserves of chrome are the most important by far outside the Soviet Union (Ali 1980:71). Segun (2007:28) reinforces Ali (1980) that African countries, namely, Nigeria, Angola, Libya, Egypt, Gabon among others have been producing crude oil for sale to European and American markets in large quantities, but poverty of various shades is still persisting in Africa (United Nations Reports, 2008). This is the context of Africa within which poverty and the forces of change are being discussed.

### **The African Situation**

Given the foregoing conceptual clarifications we consider it to be a wishful thinking to merely explore poverty and the forces of change in Africa without, shedding some light on the historical antecedents regarding the capacity for the remote and immediate causes of poverty in Africa:

### **Remote Causes of Poverty in Africa**

Dzurgba (2006) observes that the menace of poverty in Africa today can be traced from the first century A.D through the Middle age to the early modern period. He opines that North Africa shares borders with Europe, but Africa was not involved meaningfully in the Mediterranean trade and politics because of the Sahara desert that isolated it? He argues that although there were some interactions between North Africa and Europe in the areas of trade, colonization, immigrants, settlers, marriage, education, and occupations, these had little economic influence on the development of Africa (Dzurgba 2006:741). European-Asian trade developed and went beyond the Mediterranean sea and Asia Minor to Far East countries such as India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, the Spice Islands. From the first century A.D. through the Middle Age to the early modern period, European merchants bypassed Africa (Butterfield 1960:101-102). This was because Africa was out of the mainstream of economic activities for centuries. It was within this period that there was the Age of Discovery. It was at this time that West Africa, South Africa and East Africa came to be known to European traders and governments. They came in contact with agricultural

products, minerals, animal products and waterways leading to Africa's vast hinterland. Africa became important for commerce and trade and cultural studies. Exploration and trade did not cause the development of commerce, trade, industries and entrepreneurial knowledge and skills in Africa (Dzurgba 2006:743).

Exploration, commerce, trade, industries and raw materials together led to the colonization of Africa by European nations, namely, France, Britain, Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Netherlands, Germany and others partitioned and shared African territories which became colonies such as Nigeria, Ghana, Morocco, Rwanda and Burundi (Dzurgba 2001: 744). Colonial rulers introduced developmental initiatives but they were strictly within the context of the colonial powers, economic and imperial interest. Colonialism did not aim at enriching and developing African nations, rather European powers denied Africans functional education, applicable knowledge, practical skills, technical know-how and know-why, creativity, innovativeness, inventiveness and intellectual curiosity through their educational policies. This is one of the remote and fundamental bases of poverty in Africa (Dzurgba 2007: 115). This has been the case in independent countries in Africa today (Rodney 1976:103-222).

Neocolonialism is also a remote cause of poverty in Africa. Having granted independence to colonies in Africa, European countries are still controlling, influencing and determining cultural, social, economic, political policies, and their implementations. In this context, the independence and sovereignty of any African country have little meaning and implications for economic development in Africa. In view of this development, African governments cannot determine their goals, plans and management of their economics independently. The influence of neo-colonialism has compelled Africans to remain largely exporters of raw materials, for example, agricultural products, minerals, petroleum oil and animal products. Africans were importers of industrial goods and services from European nations. This has continued to prevent African countries from acquiring genuine technological knowledge, skill and political process. African countries particularly Nigeria cannot succeed in having efficient and productive petroleum oil refineries, car manufacturing factories and steel manufacturing companies.

### **Immediate Causes of Poverty in Africa**

African countries are largely dependent on agriculture that depends largely on manual labor and traditional implements such as hoes, cutlasses and axes. The absence of technical know-how and know-why has made it impossible for modern agricultural mechanization.

Men and women could work for hours, days and months only to produce small quantities of foodstuffs and cash crops (Dzurgba 2006: 747-748).

This has equally been complicated by the traditional land policy in Africa, which shares a land to families and individuals. This land policy has prevented large-scale farming and mechanization of agricultural production and distribution of foodstuffs and cash crops. A good example is the Zimbabwe's recent agricultural policy. European settlers in Zimbabwe initially acquired and owned land by introducing agricultural mechanization. However, in the recent years President Robert Mugabe later decided to take land away from white settlers and citizens in Zimbabwe. In view of this, large-scale and mechanized farms have been turned into small-scale farms through manual labor (Dzurgba 2006: 748-749; Dzurgba 2007:117).

Agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and insecticides that would have helped to improve the fertility of the soil are imported from the industrial countries of Europe, America and Asia. These insecticides and fertilizers are hoarded and sold at high prices by government officials, powerful politicians and wealthy entrepreneurs. Peasant farmers end up getting nothing. African farmers also face the serious problem of drought covering the large coverage of the African continent. The drought leads to famine and starvation of the African people. For instance, there is little rainfall in some countries in the Sahara desert in North Africa. Frequent droughts cause a widespread shortage of food and water leading to hunger, thirst, diseases and death. This is another major cause of poverty in Africa. (Dzurgba 2006: 750).

War has become a common phenomenon in Africa today since African colonies became independent in the 1960s and 1970s. The causes of civil wars in Africa have been the ethnic struggle for acquisition and control of political power, economic resources, ethnic prosperity, supremacy, ethnic-defense and security, settlements of ethnic immigrants and religious doctrinal differences. Civil wars have been fought over national borders and territorial waters. At the time of the study, Libya, Egypt, Sudan and Cot di voire have just resolved towards peaceful co-existence of their citizens, however, Senegal and Somalia are still engaging in civil unrest. In Nigeria, there are series of violent crimes cum incessant bomb explosion masterminded by Boko Haram sects from 2009 to-date (i.e. the year 2013). Thus African money is used by foreign countries to provide employment for their citizens and finance their development projects. Corruption has really contributed a great deal to the poverty in Africa today (Dzurgba 2003: 56-59).

Among individuals, causes of poverty could be traced to different factors. For income earners, their poverty is caused by low salaries, wages and allowances paid to them by their

employers. The death of a breadwinner causes a family to be poor. Illness may also prevent individuals or families from working to earn a living which is applicable to both office and manual workers. Old age or retirement could cause poverty among office workers; while manual workers like farmers, builders and carpenters are also made poor by age. Individuals may become poor because of unemployment, their poverty can then extend to families who depend on them for daily living (Mashallih 1994:409-410).

Single-parenthood may arise from the death of a spouse or unmarried parenthood of a man or a woman. It may arise from divorce or abandonment of unwanted babies. Termination of appointment of some persons on grounds of illness or gross misconduct may make individuals to be poor. Physical disability is also a cause of poverty among individual members of the society. Some individuals are physically disabled naturally or through accident. These categories of people may find it difficult to obtain gainful jobs and thereby depend on parent, relatives, charities and religious organizations for livelihood. Natural disasters such as flood, fire and rain storms do a great deal of destruction to farm crops and personal properties. Bad economic policies could lead to devaluation of money. High inflation, high taxes, several restrictions of production sectors and mismanagement of human and material resources. In addition to the above, personal weakness, idleness, laziness and imprudence cause poverty (Dzurgba 2006: 751-751). The work will now examine poverty and the forces of change in Africa today.

### **Poverty and the Forces of Change in Africa**

#### **Poverty and External Forces of Change**

Many scholars such as Brandt, (1983:16); Singer (1983:160;) Akanmidu (2004:1-2); Dzurgba (2008:733-735); and Olupona (2009:193-212) have come by way of social-ethical arguments illustrate the evil of poverty and advocated that the developed nations ought to do what they can to tackle it. It is interesting to note that it has been persistently advocated that solidarity among humanity against poverty must go beyond national boundaries. The practical problem at present is how to promote a program that sufficiently unites humanity such that can adopt the principle of sharing in the dynamics of the transformation process of technology. This, humanity is yet to achieve and hence it is only a goal inherent in argument. In the absence of this resolution, a moral resolution that would require the rich nations to sacrifice what they do not have in order to meet the basic needs of the poor nations raises legitimate questions and conflicts in the desire to solve the problem of poverty.

All the same there has been a serious campaigns among ethical theorists that morality demands that the problem of global poverty be seen as a salient responsibility principled on

the terrain of humanitarianism. Humanitarian inklings, diplomacy, strategies of diverse forms have combined to give a complex tag to aid African political structure. The main developments in the history of foreign aid moved far away from the ethical and steadily moved into the political arguments. This shift is a child of international politics governed by endless political interests. (Akanmidu, 2004:6). Apparently, from the political dimension, the interests of the donor countries or nations are embedded in the aid given. The schematic overview of the main developments in the history of foreign aid, demonstrates that collusion between political and economic interests have been the driving force behind aid reform policies since 1940 to date.

**Table 1:**Schematic Overview of main developments in the history of foreign aid

	<b>Dominant or Rising Institutions</b>	<b>Donor Ideology</b>	<b>Donor Focus</b>	<b>Types of aid</b>
1940s	Marshall Plan and UN System (including World Bank)	Planning	Recommendation	Marshall Plan was largely program Aid
1950s	United States, with Soviet Union gaining Importance from 1956	Anti-communist but with role for the state	Community Development Movement	Food aid and projects
1960s	Establishment of bilateral programmes	As for the 1950s with support for state in productive sector	Productive sectors (e.g. support to the green revolution) and infrastructure	Bilaterals gave technical assistance (TA) and budget support; multilaterals supported projects
1970s	Expansion of multilaterals especially World Bank IMF and Arab-funded agencies)	Continued support for state activities in productive and activities and meeting basic needs	Poverty, taken as agriculture and basic needs (social sectors)	Fall in food aid and start of Import support
1980s	Rise of NGOs from mid 1980s	Market-based adjustment (rolling back the state)	Macro-economic reform	Financial programme aid and relief
1990s	Eastern Europe and FSU become Recipients rather than donors; emergence of corresponding institutions	Move back to the state toward end of the decade	Poverty and then governance (environment and gender passed more quickly)	Move toward sector support at end of the decade

**Note:** Entries are main features or main changes, there are of course exceptions

**Source:** R. A. Akanmidu 2004:8

From table I, in the 1940s the principle was underlined by reconstruction from the world wars. The 1950s was community development movement, while in the 1960s it was support for productive sectors of the economy of aid recipient nations. In the 70s aid was directed at poverty in terms of meeting basic needs through the support of agriculture. The



1980, distributive principle was directed at macro-economic reforms and the 1990s was aimed at poverty alleviation and political governance (Akanmidu 2004:8-9). Moreso, 2000s was aimed at eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, and political governance (UN, New York The Millennium Development Goals Report 2008). Three distinct points could be underscored from the above table: There is a conception of the ideal state or society which is essentially the western liberal democracy to which developing nations should aspire. International foreign aid programs certainly have some influence. The history of foreign aid has always depended on the donor ideology and the choice of focus has always been the dictum of the donor countries. Then at the end of the twentieth century, international liberalism became a process political manipulation. This manipulation provided the fundamental principles regulating the conduct of aid recipient states from two major perspectives (Akanmidu, 2004: 8-9)

These perspectives are fiscal and political reforms. The introduction of Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) initiated and supervised by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the surveillance of the World Bank is a typical example of fiscal reforms. The political aspect saw the promotion of democratic reform, human rights and administrative accountability of the aid recipient nations. The forces of political conditionality can be clearly articulated in the table below:

**Table 2:**The Forces of Political Conditionality

<b>Date</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Measures Taken</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Method</b>
Sept 1991	Zaire	Suspension of aid	DEM	NEG
Sept 1991	Mongolia	Commitment of new aid	DEM/ME	POS
Oct. 1991	Haiti	Suspension of aid	DEM	NEG
Nov. 1991	Kenya	Express concern	HR/DEM	NEG
Nov. 1991	Indonesia	Express concern	HR/ DEM	DIP
March 1992	Zambia	Commitment of new aid	ME/ DEM	POS
April 1992	Peru	Express concern	DEM	DIP
May 1992	Mongolia	Commitment of new aid	DEM/ DEM	POS
May 1992	Thailand	Express concern	DEM	DIP
May 1992	Malawi	Cancellation of new aid	HR	NEG
Oct. 1992	Sudan	Suspension of aid	HR	NEG
May 1993	Sierra Leone	Suspension of aid	DEM/HR	NEG
June 1993	Guatemala	Cancellation of new aid	DEM/HR	NEG
July 1993	Kenya	Resume ODA	DEM/HR	POS
Oct. 1993	Sierra Leone	Resume ODA	NEM/HR	POS
Nov. 1993	Pakistan	Conciliation on NPT	Nuc Dev	DIP
Jan. 1994	India	Conciliation on NPT	Nuc Dev	DIP
Jan. 1994	Malawi	Resume ODA	DEM/HR	POS
March 1994	Nigeria	Cancellation of new aid	DEM	NEG
March 1994	Cambodia	Commitment of new aid	DEM	POS
June 1994	China	Express concern	Nuc Dev	DIP
July 1994	South Africa	Commitment of new aid	DEM/HR	POS
Sept 1994	Gambia	Cancellation of new aid	DEM/HR	NEG
Oct. 1994	Haiti	Resume ODA	DEM/HR	POS
Oct. 1994	China	Express concern	Nuc Dev	DIP

May 1995	China	Express concern	Nuc Dev	DIP
July 1995	Myanmar	Partially resume ODA	DEM/HR	POS
Aug. 1995	China	Stop grant aid	Nuc Dev	NEG

**Abbreviations:**

DEM = Democracy	NEG = Negative Linkage
DIP = Diplomatic Pressure	Nuc Dev = Nuclear Development
HR = Human Rights	ME = Transition to Market Economy
POS = Positive Linkage	NPT = Non-Proliferation Treaty

**Notes:** Including refusal to announce newly committed amount of aid

**Sources:** Nakagawa 1993:83; ODA-Annual Reports 1994/95, ODA Chapter Update Nakagawa (Information of October 1996 cited in R. A. Akanmidu 2004:8, 10 and 11

As shown in the above table 2, Zaire, Kenya, Zambra, Malawi, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, South Africa and Gambia, shared from this international turn down and turn out. This decision shows that aid was used as an instrument for specifying conditions of international legitimacy of any regime. Within the characteristic notion of sanctions, the countries that were sanctioned often go through situations that aggravate rather than alleviate the conditions that impede the society's improvement. It is more appealing to a nation to facilitate a re-orientation that is capable of facilitating self-evolved developmental strategies (Akanmidu 2004:12).

**Poverty and Internal Forces of Change**

It is generally believed by scholars that Africa is richly endowed, naturally and humanly (Segun 2007:27). In spite of this apparent truth, African countries are ranked among the developing countries in the world. Why is it so? The stark reality is that African nations are poor. Why have Africans not utilized to the maximum both human and natural resources at their disposal and emancipate from poverty? Why is it that African nations have for so long lived largely on foreign aid from industrial nations in view of their enormous natural wealth and human resources. There are two major factors external and internal. The external factor is the involvement of the western world as discussed above, while the internal factor concerns Africans themselves as the next attempt here.

Immediately after independence, the leaders of different political ideologies began to articulate their agenda for leadership. Political opposition, for most African leaders became tantamount almost to political enmity. Those in different political camps were conceived as unfriendly bedfellows with whom national interests could not be discussed. Consequently, when conflicts arose and each group had to look for foreign support to undo the other, whereas this is only a short step from this part of neo-colonialism. The privileged groups that were in power in their countries stood to defend ideology that gave them political and financial superiority over the other.

In an effort to remain in power the civilian rulers have to bribe their way through. Apart from giving money as bribes, appointments to high positions to those who are both qualified and unqualified, awards of bogus contracts to friends, allies, relations have characterized African leadership. Niebuhr (1960:121) explicates such an inherent dominant class of people with reference to African leaders that they are always slower to yield power because it is the source of privilege. He starkly sums up his message that:

As long as they hold on to power, they may dispense and share privilege, enjoying the moral pleasure of giving what does not belong to them. And the practical advantage of withholding enough to preserve their eminence and superiority in society. The promotion and advancement of individual interests in power override the development of modern African states.

Huntington (1968) reinforces Niebuhr's observation that:

The use of political office as a way to wealth implies a subordination of political values and institutions to economic ones. The principal purpose of politics becomes not the achievement of political goals but the promotion of individual interests (Huntington 1968:67).

Nigeria during the Abacha regime is a good example of what is happening in other parts of Africa. For instance, opposition groups resorted to armed struggle like in Sudan, Uganda, Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo) Egypt, Libya among others. In spite of these insurrections, nobody has emerged as a Messiah or succeeded in fighting official corruption in Africa, and poverty continues to persist. It is sad that Africa actually enriches Europe, but Africa is made to believe that she needs Europe to rescue it from poverty. Africa's natural and human resources continue to develop Europe and America but Africa is made to feel grateful for aid from some quarters that still sit on the back of the continent (Ngugi Wa Thiog'o 1986:28).

### **Implication of Poverty and the Forces of Change in Africa**

The forces of globalization, European and American values, had often played a denigrating role in divesting comprehension of the African socio-political and economic realities. The forces of change involve complex, cultural, economic and political institutions. In the economic institution, it serves as an extension of markets and an expansion of financial flow. In the cultural institution, it is a means of spreading different cultures around the globe,

and in the political institution, it emphasizes capitalism (Adeniyi 2004:142). The celebration of European values and ideas of western development is often found to be antithetical to Africa's needs. Whatever values that are projected within the scheme of Eurocentrism, it is believed that without a recourse and adaptation of such proposition to local realities, the challenges of African political and economic landscape would continue to witness the ills of disappointment. These forces of change had rendered the policies of most African states and governments impotent to the end that poverty alleviation and other development are pursued in the interest of a global world order without due regard to the improvement of the internal conditions of citizens within African states. The multifarious cultural nature of African nations occasioned by the arbitrary partitioning of their boundaries by their erstwhile colonial masters has not helped. The manner Africa came in contact with modern civilization made it difficult for her to effectively handle the challenges of the modern world. She was exposed to modern civilization and technology through colonialism which destroyed her psyche, culture, values and self-esteem. The effects are waves of value crises, low-esteem, disillusion, low creativity, lack of enterprise, underdevelopment, and dumping ground for all sorts of European ideas and products.

The understanding of the forces can be clearly seen in the activities of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in Nigeria. Anti-citizenship policies with respect to education are being pursued. The interest of the global world order is not in alleviating the crisis of development with ample gains to African states but in the exploitation of economic, environmental, and manpower resources.

The reverberations of Eurocentric forces are bound to be negative in one part of the world and positive in other parts, nevertheless, the gains have been much negative to African states. Eurocentric forces had not only created awareness of African existence in an interdependent world, and of our dependence on some others but, in the major sense, of our dominance by others (William 2004:60-61). African socioeconomic emancipation depends largely on those in high authority. Africans must first look inwardly before thinking on the western world.

Anyachie (2007) in his work entitled *Pragmatism: Ideology for African Development* argues that African development has been stunted by ideological disorientation and crises of values. African nations have found it difficult to evolve a consistent ideology that will galvanize their values and actions towards a sustainable development. They have been unable to transform from traditional communal society to modern scientific society despite

the wave of global scientific development and the transformation of the world into a global village.

### **The Way Out**

In reaction to the challenges confronting African nations, some people have called for the revival of the traditional culture and values, and jettisoning of European values. However, the problems still remain. For instance, which of the ethnic cultural ideologies are to be adopted based on the fact that the old traditional cultures and values cannot effectively satisfy contemporary African worldview and realities? There are already remarkable changes in African worldview and realities that require evolution of new and appropriate values and orientation to re-ignite the morale, self-esteem, and enterprising spirit of Africans for meaningful development. The view that the western world is a superior race and has a superior answer to everything even on matters concerning Africa should be jettisoned. Africans should believe in themselves as having the ability to manage their problems and chart the course of their development courageously and pragmatically. Africans should not lose sight of the fact that in international relations, nations are guided by their self interest (Anyachie 2007:163).

The foreign powers have doggedly been preventing African states from achieving their noble objective. But with time, bearing in mind the kind of leadership that will emerge in Africa if a new political order is pursued in earnest, such an obstacle is surmountable. The new African leaders need to fashion their foreign economic policy which foreign powers will have no choice but to respect and work within its policies for their own interest as well. There is a need for an African Monetary System. Africa's natural gas, gold and other essential minerals are adequate to back up and sustain the value of the anticipated African currency. Anya (1995) strengthened the argument that Africans can reconstruct their polity, re-engineer their economy and retool the psyche and the worldview of their people with new values more relevant to the challenges of the times (Anya 1995:15).

There are four essential revolutions of ideas experienced by the developed countries but which the third world countries do not know of. The first one is the concepts of the equality of all men and the dignity of each individual person to the letter. For instance, Western society was radically changed by the Judaeo-Christian principle which gave a correct idea of man and his relation to God and nature. The first radical step is to recognize the dignity of each single human person towards man's progress and that of society. In Africa, like in the West, man as the center of creation in terms of thinking and acting should become the essential nucleus around which everything else is organized. Another important

revolution that should be desired is that of the idea of progress; the advancement towards a level of life more worthy of man and full recognition of his human person. This idea of progress has given western culture an ideal; it has also broken down psychological barriers; and created a dynamic tension towards the future. Progressive mentality is a new fact in the history of man that has not yet gained popular acceptance in the third world (Gheddo 1979:28-32). According to Gheddo, population growth is an extremely positive element of socioeconomic development in the West, whereas it is opposite in the third world. In the West, the population increases in a situation that is prepared to receive all its efforts towards a better organization of its productive forces. (Gheddo 1979:33). There should be concerns for science and technology. In the West, the discovery of nature and its progressive control by means of science and technology are phenomena of recent centuries and it should be emulated. The discoveries could not have occurred without any planning and long cultural preparation culminating in modern progress.

### **Conclusion**

This work had endeavored to explore and unravel the basis of African integral enterprises which eventually leads to their poverty today. In part, the conditions that had made African nations to be poor, slow and unsteady economically were identified and explicated. It is difficult for her to offer its members all what is necessary for their complete fulfillment of the basic conditions for a human life. Africa has witnessed the forces of change based on socio-political ideology and economic interdependence from the other continents. Nevertheless, poverty is still persisting. This paper has underscored that there should be evolution of new ideas and appropriate values that would satisfy contemporary African worldviews and realities. Moreover, Africa needs to re-focus on the ideology of the United States of Africa with a view to charting the course of their development theoretically and practically with African peculiar polity. No nation, and no people, are ever fully developed; but are forever advancing towards new frontiers which are discovered along the way.

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